**Galatians 5:1-12**

Christian Freedom

**Introduction**

**Question:** How do many in our culture define freedom?

We’ve seen Paul repeatedly telling the Galatians that Christians need not fear any condemnation because of their failure to keep the law, because they are righteous in Christ. At first sight, the gospel seems to remove all incentive to live a holy life. This is why, over the centuries, churches have felt the need to tone down the radical claims of the gospel, trading gospel freedom for a message which aims to stop people living “any way I want”. So this is a critical passage. Paul wants to show us that gospel freedom from fear and condemnation leads us to obey God, not to please ourselves.

**Galatians 5:1-12**

**Question:** Paul states that Christ sets us free so that we could experience freedom (v. 1). Given the thrust of Galatians 1-4, what does Paul mean when he says we are free?

**Question:** What would it look like for you to stand firm and not to be burdened again by the yoke of slavery? In other words, what specific changes would you need to make in your life?

**Question:** Why does Paul indicate that submitting to circumcision is a serious issue (vv. 1-2)?

**Question:** What symptoms would you look for to see if another believer was enslaved by rules and regulations? What would you say to correct them?

**Question:** Is Paul teaching that the Galatian Christians who submit to circumcision will lose their salvation (v. 4)?

**Question:** Paul says neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value (v. 6). How can both of these views be true?

**Question:** Paul compares the Galatians to runners in a race and to a batch of dough (vv. 7-9). How do those comparisons illustrate the nature and perils of the Christian life?

**Question:** Why would requiring circumcision abolish the offense of the cross?

**Question:** Respond to this sentiment: Adding a little to the gospel is not a major problem, as long as we believe in the cross.

**Question:** In verse 12, Paul makes a severe statement about those who are troubling the Galatians. What was his point?

**Reflection**

If Paul were to write a letter to you personally, would he say, “You were running well” or would he say, “You are running well”? Why?